

Module Catalogue

Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS)

Global Affairs and Intercultural Relations (GAIR)



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In the module descriptions, the following abbreviations could be used:

ECTS-LP	=	European Credit Transfer System
hrs	=	Hours (= 60 minutes)
LP	=	Leistungspunkte nach dem European Credit Transfer System („Credit Points“)
ZertSaWS	=	Satzung über die Vergabe von Zertifikaten im Rahmen von weiterbildenden und weiterqualifizierenden Studien

Reference to FStuPO and Zertifikatssatzung:

In the event of discrepancies between the specifications of FStuPO, Zertifikatssatzung and module catalogue, the regulations from FStuPO and Zertifikatssatzung always take precedence.

Overview Certificate Global Affairs and Intercultural Relations (GAIR)

Empowering professionals for a complex world!

In a world of increasing geopolitical complexity, cultural interdependence, and disruptive global challenges we need professionals and leaders who possess international expertise, intercultural sensitivity, and strategic vision.

With the new certificate programme 'Global Affairs and Intercultural Relations' the University of Passau empowers participants to navigate complex global challenges with strategic, intercultural, and legal competence. In six interdisciplinary modules, participants explore global trade and governance, intercultural management and negotiation, international law, and geopolitical interdependencies – including a case-based focus on Brussels as a European hub.

Historical and cultural perspectives provide essential context for understanding global affairs. In addition, the programme offers the opportunity to build or expand a career-relevant international network. Experienced experts, such as high-ranking diplomats from the Federal Foreign Office, including numerous alumni of the University of Passau, are involved as guest lecturers. This ensures that theory and practice are closely interlinked.

1. Modules, Duration and Qualification profile

1.1 Modules of the Certificate Global Affairs and Intercultural Relations (GAIR):

Module 1 – International relations and Global governance

Content:

The decline of the Liberal World Order presents new diplomatic challenges for global governance, transnational networks and nation-states. Simultaneously, political shifts – including rising populism, autocratic influence and escalating conflicts – reshape global dynamics.

This module encourages participants to reflect on the diplomatic strategies pursued by Germany and the EU to date in an increasingly volatile and less predictable world.

Module 2 – Legal principles of international relations, global trade and foreign investment

Content:

Economic globalisation and its rules-based order face growing pressure from renationalisation, Russia's aggression, and US-China rivalry, while global trade and investment remain vital. Despite these challenges, persistent economic interdependencies and transnational threats demand continued multilateral cooperation.

This module calls for the development of strategic responses to transformations of the world legal and economic order.

- Legal principles of inter-state relations and institutionalised cooperation
- “New Deals”: regional free trade agreements, multilateralisation of investment protection and beyond
- Business and human rights
- “Navigating uncharted waters”: how to secure political and economic stability through EU and international law – prospects for Germany’s and the EU’s role in fostering and sustaining a rules-based global (economic) order

Module 3 – Global trade, Trade policy and Europe in the New World (Trade) Order

Content:

Globalisation peaked in 2008 as global trade’s share of GDP declined, with key trade deals stalling while Brexit, pandemic disruptions, and Russia’s energy war exposed vulnerabilities. This module highlights the need of a new strategy for Germany’s export-oriented economy in light of China’s aggressive subsidies and geopolitical competition, which is reshaping global trade dynamics.

Module 4 – Strategic Intercultural Management and Negotiation

Content:

Corporate leaders and policymakers must strategically navigate intercultural dynamics, global value chains and geopolitical complexities to succeed in today’s interconnected world.

- Strategic thinking in turbulent times
- Internationalization of organisations
- Intercultural management
- Intercultural negotiation

Module 5 – Geographical Perspectives on Global Economic and Political Interdependencies: The Case of Brussels (On-site)

Content:

This module provides insight into global power relations during a stay in Brussels. The European capital is analysed both from a critical geopolitical perspective and from the perspective of global cities.

It offers the opportunity to engage directly with key decision-makers, including Passau alumni in prominent positions, and learn how they are addressing the challenges of globalisation.

Module 6 – Cultural and historical perspectives on Global Affairs

Content:

This module provides cultural and historical perspectives to understand our interconnected, multipolar world. It focuses on transcultural dynamics that challenge Eurocentric views and analyses political structures such as empires, nations and alliances.

Special attention is given to Europe, Germany and Bavaria’s place in global contexts. Participants gain analytical tools to interpret cultural and historical phenomena beyond national boundaries, encouraging critical reflection on globalisation’s continuities and ruptures.

1.2 Duration and Credits:

- 10 months (kick-off weekend and 5 workshop weekends in Passau, one in Brussels, online evening sessions)
- 10 ECTS credits (300 hours)

1.3 Qualification profile Certificate GAIR:

Participants will:

- Understand and critically assess core concepts of international relations, global governance, and geopolitical developments.
- Explain and apply legal frameworks governing inter-state relations and international trade.
- Analyse global trade and economic dynamics, evaluating their significance for Europe and Germany.
- Employ economic-geographic perspectives to explain global interdependencies and understand political decision-making at international hubs (e.g., Brussels).
- Develop intercultural management and negotiation skills to operate effectively in multinational contexts.
- Recognise and reflect on historical and cultural developments as foundations of modern international systems and identities.
- Conduct interdisciplinary analyses of complex global challenges and propose solutions.
- Present, negotiate, and argue persuasively in English.

1.4 Participant Profile and entry requirements:

This programme is particularly suitable for professionals and leaders in globally operating companies, at consultancies, NGOs, international organisations or in public administration.

Entry requirements:

- Higher education degree
- At least three years of relevant professional experience
- Good knowledge (B2/C1 CEFR) of English

2. Description of Modules

Module 1: International Relations and Global Governance	
Responsible teaching team	
Prof. Dr. Bernhard Stahl (International Politics) Prof. Dr. Oliver Hidalgo (Political Theory)	
Experts and partners from professional practice	
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Workload	
2 ECTS (60 hrs, 14,5 hrs in presence)	
Workshop / Training Days	
See schedule	
Forms of teaching and learning	
Mix of individual preparation and in-class teaching	
Language of instruction	
English	
Overview and Rationale	
<p>The demise of the Liberal World Order (LWO) stipulates new challenges for diplomacy, transnational networks and nation-states alike. This observation is mirrored when it comes to the governance of the global commons: Be it climate change, migration, the legitimacy and effectiveness of International Organisations, or the classical question of war and peace – all of these issues will most probably be handled differently in the future. Alongside the demise of the LWO the political world, including political communication, is undergoing dramatic, profound, if not revolutionary change affecting all aspects of human society, including international economic relations. For one, democracies suffer from internal pressures such as populism and so-called polycrises. At the same time, many countries no longer defend the LWO trying to arrange themselves vis-à-vis autocratic states while autocratic states become more important, intervening in wars as well as mediating in conflicts. Overall, conflicts tend to become more violent, more disruptive, less pluralistic and less public. This emerging new international (dis-)order raises systemic and conceptual questions for German and European policy-making and diplomacy and practitioners.</p>	
Learning objectives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehend the implications of the fading Liberal Order • Critically assess future scenarios • Discuss its consequences for German and European policymaking and diplomacy and practitioners 	
Examination form and scope	
Portfolio (including final presentation and oral exam)	

Module 2: Legal Principles of International Relations, Global Trade and Foreign Investment
Responsible teaching team
Prof. Dr. Hans-Georg Dederer (Chair of Constitutional and Administrative Law, Public International Law, European and International Economic Law) Prof. Dr. Christoph Herrmann, LL.M. (Chair of Constitutional and Administrative Law, European Law, European and International Economic Law)
Experts and partners from professional practice
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Workload
2 ECTS (60 hrs; 10 hrs in presence, 4 hrs online)
Workshop / Training Days
See schedule
Forms of teaching and learning
Forms of teaching: Lectures, decision-based case analyses, problem-based case analyses, paper presentations, debates Forms of learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attending, and active participation in, class • homework / assignments outside class: reading of textbook chapters (excerpts) as well as of judgments, arbitral awards, and reports (excerpts); preparation of papers, presentations, and problem analyses; as the case may be, drafting of treaty (clauses), declarations of principles, and other forms of international instruments Materials for class and homework / assignments: To be distributed via electronic platform (e.g. ILIAS)
Order of completion / Previous and following workshop / suggested prerequisites
<u>Week 1-4</u> Kick-off meeting (2 hrs in presence) Homework / assignments (16 hrs, 4 hrs/week, i.e. 4 weeks)
<u>Week 5</u> Class 1 (4 hrs, online)
<u>Week 6-10</u> Homework / assignments (16 hrs, 4 hrs/week, i.e. 4 weeks)
<u>Week 11:</u> Class 2 (4 hrs, presence) Class 3 (4 hrs, presence)
<u>Week 12-15</u> Exam preparation and exam (14 hrs, 4 hrs/week, i.e. 3 ½ weeks)

Language of instruction
English
Overview and Rationale
Economic globalization and its underlying rules-based legal order are under pressure by politics of re-nationalization. The global legal order, and more particularly European peace and stability, are further undermined by Russia’s war of aggression and its hybrid destabilization efforts across Europe. The antagonism between China and the U.S. will have profound impacts on the emergence of a new political and economic world order. On the other hand, there are no signs that transboundary trade and investment will fade out. To the contrary, global interdependencies of states and economies will persist and call for bilateral and multilateral forms of cooperation. Global crises such as climate change, biodiversity loss and pandemics, and the realization of the UN Sustainable Development Goals require concerted international efforts.
Main elements of the module
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal principles of inter-state relations and institutionalized cooperation (2 hrs) Statehood (and the case of Palestine) – sovereign equality (and the case of immunity of states and state officials) – prohibition of use of force (and the case of the Ukraine war) – non-intervention (and the case of economic pressure) – international organizations (e.g., UN and WTO) – treaty regimes (e.g. UNFCCC and BBNJ) • “New Deals”: regional free trade agreements, multilateralization of investment protection and beyond (4 hrs) “Old deals”: GATT and other WTO agreements – bilateral investment treaties – regional economic integration (e.g., EU) – old deals = bad deals? More recent developments: EU trade and investment agreements after Lisbon – modernization of the Energy Charter Treaty – multilateral reform efforts of Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) – better deals? Latest developments: bilateral tariff deals à l’Américaine? • Business and human rights (2 hrs) International human rights instruments: overview – whose human rights obligation? – extraterritorial applicability of human rights? – a UN Business and Human Rights Treaty: unviable ab initio? – the Supply Chain Act: will it survive? • “Navigating uncharted waters”: how to secure political and economic stability through EU and international law – prospects for Germany’s and the EU’s role in fostering and sustaining a rules-based global (economic) order (4 hrs) The concept of a rules-based legal order – the enforcement problem in international law – the U.S.-backed international legal and economic order and new U.S. isolationism – Germany’s sometimes dazzling attitude: the genocide cases before the ICJ and the arrest warrants of the ICC – effectiveness of legal claims in international law: do Germany and the EU have the requisite power? – the EU’s toolbox: fit for purpose in international trade wars? – inbound and outbound investment screening: protection of strategic infrastructure and strategic know-how – strategic autonomy in an interdependent world: squaring the circle?

Learning objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain and apply the legal bases and principles of inter-state relations and institutionalized cooperation• Contextualize and assess current developments in world trade and international investment• Reflect on human rights obligations of states and corporations• Analyze, assess, and develop strategic responses to transformations of the world legal and economic order• Communicate and argue effectively in English in international policy and business contexts, including negotiations, presentations, and written analyses.
Examination form and scope
Written exam (2 hrs = 120 min): open book exam, in presence or via electronic platform

Module 3: Global Trade, Trade Policy and Europe in the New World (Trade Order)
Responsible lecturer
Prof. Dr. Sebastian Krautheim (Chair of International Economics)
Experts and partners from professional practice
Dr. Martin Braml (German Ministry of Finance, CESifo research fellow, Partner of Munich Economics)
Workload
2 ECTS (60 hrs, 16 hrs in presence)
Workshop / Training Days
See schedule
Forms of teaching and learning
This module uniquely combines academic and policy perspectives through team-taught sessions by Prof. Krautheim and Dr. Braml. The didactic approach of the in-class teaching of this module integrates concise presentations of core concepts, theoretical frameworks and facts about recent developments of the global economy through targeted lectures. Interactive discussions of core concepts and their relation to recent developments in global trade policy are a cornerstone of the concept. One focus is on learning about the participants' diverse perspectives on the recent changes in the global economy in their own professional contexts. The in-class interaction is complemented by take-home assignments (esp. readings), writing of a term paper and a final presentation with feedback from the peers.
Language of instruction
English
Overview and Rationale
If globalization is understood as the share of global trade in relation to global economic output, it had already peaked in 2008. Major free trade initiatives, including the transatlantic agreements TTIP and Mercosur, subsequently lost credibility. Brexit led to a disentanglement of European trade relations, and during the pandemic, supply chain disruptions exposed critical dependencies. Russia launched an energy war against Europe aimed at undermining foreign and security policy sovereignty through oil and gas dependence. Meanwhile, China is pursuing a subsidy-driven export strategy with the goal of becoming a technological leader in key sectors – motivated, it appears, not only by economic interests. At the same time, the rules-based world order suffers an existential crisis, and it remains to be seen if the U.S. will continue to treat European countries as partners or rather like colonies. These developments require a fundamental reassessment of European trade policy. This is of particular importance for an export-driven economy such as Germany's.
Main elements of the module
This module aims at providing participants with a deep understanding of current developments in global economic affairs. With the massive changes in trade and macroeconomic policies especially of the U.S. and China, this is a fast-moving target. The list of topics provided here is therefore indicative. Suggested topics combine fundamental background information and theoretical concepts with the discussion of recent developments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief economic history of – and current facts on – economic globalization: from its very beginning, mankind engaged in trade and, over time, became ever more effective in doing so. Technological progress drives globalization while the recent

<p>surge of geopolitical fragmentation leads to a return of trade barriers. What can we learn from history for the new era of protectionism many observers see dawning?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The political economy of free trade: economists typically consider free and open markets superior to protectionism and autarky. Global economic development since 1990 that has led to unprecedented wealth in almost all world regions, which seems to prove this a success story. Nevertheless, there are winners and losers from international trade both within and between countries. How does this relate to the recent backlash against globalization? • The weaponization of interdependencies: free economic interactions are beneficial for either side. However, state interventions in commodity markets and certain critical products pose the risk of economic blackmailing. Russia's energy war, Chinese rare earth exports bans and Trump's tariff wars against close allies provide recent examples. What is the logic of trade wars and how can Europe navigate through them? • Risks of persistent macroeconomic imbalances: large and persistent trade surpluses mechanically translate into a surge in net foreign assets. Simply put: for decades, the U.S. financed exorbitant levels of consumption (imports) through credit, which its trade partners would willingly provide. What if the world's only super-power decides not to pay back its debt, ex-post turning the exports into tributes, as the "Mar-a-Lago accord" suggests? How could Europe cope with this and who would ultimately pay the bill?
<p>Learning objectives</p>
<p>Upon successful completion of this module, participants are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the main facts and historical developments in global trade in the context of recent developments. • Analyze the drivers and consequences of recent shifts in global trade policy, assessing their impact on Europe and Germany's export-based economy. • Use theoretical concepts to discuss gains from free trade as well as protectionism and discuss the role of winners and losses from international trade on the backlash against globalization. • Develop strategic responses to the weaponization of both trade dependencies (e.g., energy, rare earths...) as well macroeconomic imbalances (the U.S. twin deficit). • Communicate complex trade policy challenges effectively, both in written analyses and presentations. • Reflect on Europe's strategic options in navigating trade wars, geopolitical tensions, and the reconfiguration of global supply chains.
<p>Examination form and scope</p>
<p>Portfolio</p>
<p>Reading recommendations</p>
<p>The reading list will be constantly updated to account for recent developments. A list with baseline readings will be provided on the day of the kickoff meeting.</p>

Module 4: Strategic Intercultural Management and Negotiation
Responsible teaching team
Prof. Dr. Christoph Barmeyer (Chair of Intercultural Communication) Prof. Dr. Andreas König (Chair of Strategic Management, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship)
Experts and partners from professional practice
Dr. Fritz Audebert (CEO, ICUnet AG)
Workload
2 ECTS (60 hrs, 12 hrs in presence)
Workshop / Training Days
See schedule
Teaching Methodology and Key Activities
This highly interactive module is designed to foster deep learning and practical skill development. Its didactic approach integrates concise presentations of core concepts and theoretical frameworks through targeted lectures, alongside in-depth group work on real-world business and policy cases involving intercultural challenges via case study discussions. Participants will benefit from practical application exercises, providing opportunities to apply course content directly to their own professional experiences. Learning is further enriched by peer counseling sessions, which are structured discussions where participants present and receive feedback on intercultural work situations to collaboratively develop actionable recommendations. Finally, the module incorporates negotiation simulations, offering hands-on exercises to practice and hone intercultural negotiation strategies.
Language of instruction
English
Overview and Rationale
In today's interconnected global landscape, corporate leaders and policymakers face the imperative of strategically managing intercultural dynamics. Leaders need to operate in the increasing complexity of globalized value chains, international business, and growing political frictions and turbulence. Therefore, they must act strategically and navigate multicultural environments and relationships. This module addresses the critical need for strategic thinking when approaching intercultural challenges – focusing on achieving shared objectives, identifying key leverage points, and making decisions that account for the inherent trade-offs and frictions among diverse stakeholders. The module particularly focuses on leaders' challenge to effectively manage cultural differences, as these can significantly influence strategic orientations, decision-making processes, operational workflows, organizational structures, negotiation outcomes, and the leadership of individuals and teams. Interactions with international partners and culturally diverse employees often present linguistic and cultural nuances that profoundly impact daily operations and overall strategic success.

Main elements of the module
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategic thinking in turbulent times (4 hrs: König)• Internationalization of organizations (4 hrs: Barmeyer)• Intercultural management (4 hrs: Barmeyer)• Intercultural negotiation (4 hrs: Audebert)
Learning objectives
Upon successful completion of this module, participants will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze and understand key frameworks of strategic thinking, international management, and intercultural negotiation.• Critically evaluate the impact of cultural differences on strategic decision-making, organizational behavior, and international negotiations.• Develop and apply practical strategies for managing intercultural challenges and leading diverse teams effectively.• Navigate complex, politically contested decision-making situations in international contexts with enhanced confidence and cultural sensitivity.• Refine their negotiation skills for successful outcomes in cross-cultural settings.
Core Philosophy
The underlying idea of this module is that strategic thinking and constructive intercultural competence are indispensable assets for effective management, policymaking, and diplomacy in the 21st century. It champions cultural diversity not as a barrier, but as a source of strength and enrichment that can foster creativity, innovation, and organizational effectiveness.
Examination form and scope
Portfolio

Module 5: Geographical Perspectives on Global Economic and Political Interdependencies: The Case of Brussels (On-site)
Responsible teaching team
Prof. Dr. Werner Gamerith (Regional Geography) Prof. Dr. Jörg Scheffer (Geography)
Experts and partners from professional practice
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Workload
2 ECTS (60 hours)
Workshop / Training Days
See schedule
Language of instruction
English and German
Content
<p>Economic and political interdependencies are becoming increasingly complex worldwide. From an economic geography perspective, economic areas and their interdependencies can be well understood in global hubs of economic power and political decision. At these spots, current fields of global dependencies can well be shown. Critical geopolitics approaches, which deal with resources and their availability in the context of power relations, will be useful to adapt.</p> <p>The effects of global interdependencies can be studied particularly well at the hubs of the global economy (global cities). The module therefore takes place in presence in Brussels in a specific learning location. Here, characteristic phenomena and problems of globalization can be easily grasped and the interconnections with relevant players in the power center of Europe can be studied and exemplified.</p>
Learning objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze economic and political interdependencies through the lens of economic geography Participants will be able to examine global economic hubs (e.g., global cities) and assess how these nodes illustrate patterns of trade, investment, and geopolitical influence. • Apply critical geopolitics frameworks to resource dependencies and power dynamics Participants will use critical geopolitics approaches to evaluate how access to resources (e.g., energy, technology) shapes international relations and strategic decision-making. • Examine globalization's tangible effects in a real-world context (Brussels) Through on-site learning in Brussels, participants will observe and interpret phenomena such as policymaking, lobbying, and multilateral cooperation within a major European power center. • Engage with key stakeholders to understand decision-making processes Participants will interact with relevant actors (e.g., EU institutions, NGOs etc.) to analyze how global interdependencies are negotiated and managed in practice.
Examination form and scope
Portfolio

Module 6: Cultural and Historical perspectives of Global Affairs
Responsible teaching team
Prof. Dr. Karsten Fitz (American Studies) Prof. Dr. Britta Kägler (European Regional History) Prof. Dr. Thomas Kohl (European Medieval History and Cultures)
Experts and partners from professional practice
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Workload
2 ECTS (60 hours, 12 in presence)
Workshop / Training Days
See schedule
Language of instruction
English
Overview and Rationale
<p>This module introduces participants to the cultural and historical foundations of today's interconnected and multipolar world. By examining the formation, transformation, and interaction of cultures and political orders over time, participants will develop a nuanced understanding of how global affairs are shaped by historical processes and transcultural dynamics. A central focus lies on (trans-)cultural perspectives that challenge Eurocentric narratives and open up comparative insights across regions and national cultures by exploring how cultural exchange, migration, trade, religion, and communication have continuously redefined identities and worldviews past and present. Special attention is given to Europe and Germany (and particularly Bavaria) and their place in the world.</p> <p>From a historical and transcultural perspective, the module traces Europe's shifting role—from a peripheral zone to imperial center to a partner in global networks—and reflects on Germany's (and Bavaria's) cultural, political, and intellectual contributions within these transformations. Participants will critically engage with questions of heritage, memory, and identity in a global context, considering how local and regional histories intersect with broader transnational developments.</p> <p>The module also explores Empires, Nations, and Alliances as key forms of political and cultural order. Thus, participants investigate how power, sovereignty, and belonging have been constructed and contested across time. Case studies may include imperial legacies, the rise of nationalism, colonial and postcolonial encounters, and the emergence of international and supranational alliances shaping the modern global order. Overall, participants will be equipped with analytical tools to interpret historical and cultural phenomena beyond national boundaries, encouraging critical reflection on the continuities and ruptures that define our globalized world today.</p>

Learning objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze historical and cultural developments that shape today's international systems• Increase in-depth understanding of and awareness for cultural and (trans-)cultural sensitivities• Assess the role of cultural heritage and memory in shaping collective identities and international perceptions• Identify biases and assumptions in historical narratives and reflect on their implications for intercultural practices.
Examination form and scope
Portfolio